

A STORY OF LOVE, INTRIGUE AND ADVENTURE

SYNOPSIS

Robert Harcliffe, fresh from college and a member of a firm in New Orleans. of which his Uncle Nelson is the head, is sent by his uncle to Brazil to act as private secretary and confidential companion to Dom Miguel de Pintra, head of the revolutionary movement against Dom Pedro. Dom Miguel had been a good customer of the Harcliffes, and he and the elder member of the firm were fast friends. Laking the prospect of adventure, Robert consented to go.

On the voyage-he encountered Valcour, a spy sent by the Emperor of Brazil, who knew that the American secretary was expected. This spy had decided that Robert was the person for whom he was looking and had planned to make way with nim.

But the American cleverly threw him off the scent and reached Rio in safety. There he was, however, arrested, but on the was it to the police incadquarters his captor was murdered by Police Sergeant Marco, a revolutionist, and he was allowed to escape, intally reaching his destination through the assistance of many devotees to the cause. At the beauthul home of Dom Miguel's daughter, feabel de Mar.

The next morning he had an unpleasant experience with Madame Izabel, who had been acting as Dom Miguel's secretary, but was relieved by him. The revolutionists did not trust her. Dom Miguel revealed to him the secret of a hidden vault where all the party's papers and treasure were hidden. While they were entering the vault with lights extinguished Madam Izabel suddenly appeared, struck a light and tried to discover how the lock was worked. The father seized her, and, denouncing her as a spy, seint her from the room.

Meanwhile Harcliffe had been getting deeper in love with Lesba, and more deeply mystified by her brother, who was chief of Dom Pedro's police.

One might Dorn Miguel aroused his secretary with the startling statement that Izabel had stolen the ring which was the key to the treasure vault. They captured her as the came from the vault with a bundle of papers. When Dom Miguel's residence, only to find the Emperor's presence. An a

with his crazy reliow-prisoners, manages to escape.

He finds a carriage, with Lesba in it, makes his escape to the headquarters of the insurgents, where he finds Dom Miguel and his friends, who had risen in open rebellion, with the Emperon's troops in hot pursuit.

Finding themselves surrounded the insurgents fight until their refuge is broken down. They are captured and informed that it is the order that every one must be executed without delay.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST SUNDAY.)

Chapter XXIII

AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR. E AROUSED ourselves at this, and regarded the captain atten-

He turned his stern gaze upon one after the other, and gave a growl of satisfaction as he noted no

You shall draw cuts, gentlemen, to decide the order in which you must expiate your crime. I will show no partiality. See, here are the slips, a numher written upon each. Julio shall place them in his hat and allow you to draw." He handed the bits of paper to one of his men and strode to the door of

"Open!" he commanded, giving it a There was no reply.

ear to the panel. Then, with a sudden gesture, he swung

A moment the officer stood motion less, gazing into the chamber. Then he turned to us a face convulsed with an

Who permitted the woman to escape?" he demanded.

The guards, startled and amazed, peered over his shoulders into the vacant room, but none dared to answer. "What now, Captain, has your bird

flown?" came Valcour's soft voice, and the spy entered the room and threw himself carelessly into a chair. Souza looked upon his colleague

with evident suspicion, and twisted the ends of his moustache in sullen fury. Perhaps he dared not accuse Valcour openly, as the latter was the Emperor's authorized representative. And it may be the captain was not sincerely sorry that Lesba had escaped, and so saved him from the necessity of executing her, wrath of the officer seemed to cool, and

wrath of the officer seemed to cool, and he slowly regained his composure. Valcour, who was watching him, appeared to notice this, and said:
"You fovget the window, my Captain. It was not difficult for the senhorita to steal across the roadway unobserved and take refuge in the forest. For my part, I am glad she is gone. Our royal master has little credit in condemning a woman to such a death."
"Have a care, senhor. Your words are treasonable."

treasonable."

"The Emperor will be the first to appland them, when he has time to think. Indeed, de Souza, were I in your place, I should ignore the order to execute these people. His Majesty acted under a severe nervous strain, and he will not thank you, believe me, for carrying out his instructions so literally."
"A sodier's duty is to obey," returned the officer, stiffly. Then, turning to the tall Uruguayan who held the hat, he added:



bonds, and Paola, who was the first to be approached by Julio, took a slip of paper from the hat and thrust it into his pocket without examination.

Sanchez Bastro drew next, and smiled turn, and I own that I could not repress a slight trembling of my fingers as I drew forth the fatal slip. It was number

"Good!" murmured de Pintra, reading the slip over my shoulder. "I shall not be alive to witness your death. Robert." And then he took the last paper from the hat and added, "I am number two." "I am first," said Bastro, with cheer-ulness. "It is an honor, Dom Miguel," and he bowed respectfully to the chief.

Paola wore again the old, inane smile that always lent his face an indescrib able leer of idiocy! I knew, by this time, that the expression was indeed a mask to cover his real feelings, and idly wondered if he would choose to die with that detestable simper upon his lips.

"Come, gentlemen; we are ready." It was the captain who spoke, and we rose obediently and filed through the doorway, closely guarded by the Uru-

the vacant space that served as a yard for Bastro's house stood a solitary date-palm, with a straight, slender trunk. Before this we halted, and Bastro was led to the tree and a rope pass ed around his body, securing him to the trunk. They offered to blindfold him, but he waved the men aside.

"It will please me best to look into the muzzles or your guns," said the patriot, m a quiet voice. "1 am not atrato, Sen-

There was no reply.

De Souza glanced at the sun. It was "Open!" said he, again, and placed his slowly sinking, a bail of vivid red, into At a gesture from the onicer six of the

At a gesture from the ofacer six of the guarusmen stepped forward and leveled their carbines upon Bastro, who stood upright against the tree, with a produstine upon his manly face.

I turned away my head, feeling sick and Guzzy; and the rattle of carbines set me tremoding with nervous horror. Nor that I look toward the tree again, although, latter an interval of shence, I heard the tramp of soldiers hearing Bastro's nody to the deserted house.

"Number two!" cried de Souza, harship.

It was no time to turn craven. My own It was no time to turn craven. My own death was but a question or moments, and I realized that I had little time to not larewell to my kind friend and strive to cheer him upon his way. Going to his side, I seized Dom Migdel's hand and pressed it to my lips; but he was not content with that, and caught me in a warm and affectionate embrace.

Then he was led to the tree. I turned my back, covering my face with my hands.

"For the Cause!" I heard his gentle

my back, covering my face with my hands.

"For the Cause!" I heard his gentle voice say, the carbines rang out a second time, and a convulsive sob burst from my throat in spite of my strong efforts to control my emotion.

Again I listened to the solemn tread of the soldhers, while from far away the sound of a shout was borne to us upon the still evening air.

Somehow, that distant shout thrilled me with a new-born hope, and I gazed eagerly along the line of roadway that skirted the forest.

De Souza was gazing there, too, with a disturbed look upon his face; but the light was growing dim, and we could see nothing.

see nothing.
"Nimber three!"
It was Paola's turn, and he walkedu n?
assisted to the tree and set his back to
it, while the soldiers passed the rope under his arms and then retired. But they
left Valcour confronting the prisoner,
and I saw the simper fade from Paola's
lips and an eager gleam light his pale
features.

For a few moments they stood thus

For a few moments they stood thus, separated from all the rest, and exchanging earnest whispers, while the captain stamped his foot with savage impatience. "Come, come, Valcour!" he called, at last. "You are interfering with my duty, Leave the prisoner, I command you!" The spy turned around, and his face

was positively startling in its expression of intense agony.

"If you are in a hurry, my dear Captain, fire upon us beth!" said he, bit-With a muttered oath de Souza strode

forward, and, seizing Valcour by the arm, dragged him back of the figing But at that instant a startling sound

reached our ears—the sound of a cheer-and with it came the rapid patter of The soldiers, who had already leveled their guns at Paola, swung suddenly around upon their heels; de Souza utter-

ed an exclamation of dismay, and the rest of us stood as motionless as if turn-For sweeping around the curve of the forest came a troop of horsemen led by a girl, whose fluttering white skirts trail-

ed behind her like a banner borne on the breeze. God! how they rode—the horses plunging madly forward at every bound, their red eyes and distended nostrils bearing evidence of the wild run that had well-nigh exhausted their strength. And the riders, as they sighted us, screamed curses and encouragement in the same breath, bearing down upon our silent group with the speed of a whirl-

There was little time for the Uruguayans to recover from their surprise, for at close range the horsemen let fly a voiley from rine and revolver that did deadly havoc. A few saddles were empticed in return, but almost instantly the sofdiers and patriots were engaged in a desperate hand-to-hand connect, with no quarter given or expected.

De Souza fell wounded at the first volley, and I saw Valcour, with a giad cry, start forward and run toward Faola, who was still bound to his tree. But the captain, liaff raising himself from the ground, aimed his revolver at the prisoner, as it determined upon his death in spine of the promised rescue.

"Look out!" I shouted, observing the action. There was little time for the Uruguay-

action.

Paola was, of course, helpless to evade the bullet; out Valcour, who had nearly reached him, turned suddenly at my cry and threw aimself in front of Paola just as the shot rang out.

An instant the spy stood motionless. Then, tossing his arms above his head, he fell backward-and lay still.

Chapter XXIV



THE EMPEROR'S SPY.

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LTHOUGH the deadly conflict was raging all about us, I passed it by to regard a still more exciting tragedy. For with a roar like that from a mad ouli Mazanovitch dashed aside his captors and sprang to the spot where Valcour lay.

'Oh, my darning, my darling!' he moaned, raising the delicate form that he might pillow the head upon his knee. How dared they harm you,my prectons one! How dared they!

Paola, stringgling madly with his bonds, succeeded in bursting them asunder, and now staggered up to kneel beside Valcour. His eyes were staring and full of a horror that his own near approach to death had never for an instant evoked.

Taking one of the spy's hands in both

Taking one of the spy's hands in both his own, he pressed it to his heart, and said in trembling tones:
"Look up, sweetheart! Look up, I beg of you, it is Francisco—do you not know me? Are you dead, Valcour? Are

know me? Are you dead, Valcour? Are you dead?"

A gentle hand pushed him aside, and Lesba knelt in his place. With deft fingers she bared Valcour's breast, tearing away the soft linen through which a crimson stain had already spread, and bending over a wound in the left shoulder to examine it closely. Standing beside the little group, I found myself regarding the actors in this remarkable drama with an interest almost equaling their own. The bared breast revealed nothing to me, however; for already I knew that Valcour was a woman.

Presently Lesba looked up into the little man's drawn face and smiled.

"Fear nothing, Captain Mazanovitch,"

said she softly; "the wound is not very dangerous, and-please God!-we will yet save your daughter's life."

His daughter! How much of the mystery that had puzzled me this simple word revealed! Paola, still kneeling and covering his

face with his hands, was sobbing like a Mazanovitch drew a long breath and allowed his lids to again droop slowly over his eyes; and then Lesba looked up and our eyes met.

'I am just in time, Robert," she murmured, happily, and bent over Valcour to hide the flush that dyed her sweet

the gathering twilight the forms of the slaughtered Uruguayans lay revealed where they had fallen, for not a single member of Dom Pedro's band of mercenaries had escaped the vengeance of

Those of our rescuers who survived were standing in a little group ne leaning upon their long rifles, awaiting

Among them I recognized Pedro, and, to the house and lifted a door from its hinges. Between us we bore it to the yard and very gently placed Valcour's light form upon the improvised stretch-

ly unclosed her eyes. It was Paola's tace that bent over her and Paola that pressed her hand; so she smiled and closed her eyes again, like a tired child. We carried her into the little chamoer whence Leson has escaped for in the outer room lay side by side the silent forms of the martyrs of the Republic.

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Tenderly placing Valcour upon the couch, Pedro and 1 withdrew and closed couch, Pedro and 1 withdrew and closed the goor behind us.

I had started to pass through the outer room into the yard, when an exclamation from the station master arrested ine. Turning back, I found that redro had knet beside bom anguet, and with broken sobs was pressing the master's hand passionately to his his. My own heart was heavy with sorrow as 1 leaded over the outsiretched form of our beloved chief for a last look into his still face.

ed over the outstretched form of our beloved chief for a last look into his stin lace.

Even as I did so my pulse gave a bound of loy. The heavy cyclids trembled—ever so slightly—the chest expanded in a gentle sigh, and slowly, on, so slowly!—the eyes of Dom Miguel unclosed and gazed apon us with their accustomed sweetness and intelligence.

"Master! Master! cried Pedro, bending over with trembling eagerness, "It is done! It is done, my master. The Revolution is 'accomplished—Fonseca is supreme in Rio—the army is ours! The country is ours! God biess the Republic of Brazil!"

My own heart swelled at the glad tidings, now heard for the first time. But over the face of the martyred chief swept an expression of loy so ecstatic—so like a dream of heaven furifiled—that we scarcely breathed as we watched the light grow radiant in his eyes and linger there while an ashen pallor succeeded the flush upon his cheeks.

Painfully Dom Miguel reached out his arms to us, and Pedro and I each clasped a hand with our own.

"I am glad," he whispered, softly. "Glad and content. God blees the Republic of Brazil!"

The head fell back; the light faded from his eyes and left them glazed and staring; a tremor passed through his body, communicating its agony even to us who held his hands, as by an electric current.

Pedro still kneeled and soboed, but I

current.

Pedro still kneeled and soboed, but I contented myself with pressing the hand and laying it gently upon Dom Miguel's breast.
Truly it was done, and well done. In Rio they were cheering the Republic; while here in this isolated cottage, surrounded by the only carnage the Revolution had involved, lay stilled forever that great heart which had given to its native land the birthright of Liberty.

Lesba had dressed Valcour's wound with surprising skill, and throughout the iong, dreary night she bathed the girl's

hot forehead and nursed her as tender- times upon important secret missions ly as a sister might, while Paola sat silently by and watched her every move-

In the early morning Pedro summoned us to breakfast, which he had himself prepared; and, as Valcour was sleeping, Lesba and Mazanovitch joined me at the while Paola still kept ward in the wounded girl's chamber.

The patriots were digging a trench in which to inter the dead Uruguayans, and I stood in the doorway a moment and watched them, drinking in at the same time the cool morning air.

There Lesba joined me, somewhat pale from her night's watching; and although as yet no word of explanation had passed between us, she knew that I no longer doubted her loyalty, and forbore to blame me for my stupidity in not comprehending that her every action had been for the welfare of the Cause.

At breakfast Pedro told us more of the nderful news; how the Revolution had succeeded in Rio with practically no bloodshed or resistance; how Fonseca had met the Emperor at the train on his arrival and escorted him, well guarded, to the port, where he was put on board a ship that sailed at once for Lisbon. Indeed, that was to be the last of Dom Pedro's rule, for the populace immediately proclaimed Fonseca dictator, and the patriots' dream of a Republic of

Brazil had become an established fact. Presently we passed into the outer room and looked upon the still form of Miguel de Pintra, the man to whose genius the new Republic owed its suc cess—the great leader who had miser

cess—the great leader who had miserably perished on the very eve of his notice achievement.

The conspiracy was a conspiracy no longer; it had attained to the dignity of a masterly revolution, and the Cause of Freedom had once more prevailed.

Taking Lesba's hand, we passed the bodies of Eastro and Captain de Souza and gained the yard, waiking showly along the road that skirted the forest, while she tool me how Valcour had assisted her to escape from the chamber, that she might summon the patriots to effect our rescue. She had wandered long in the forest, she explained, before Peuro met her and assisted her to gather the band that had saved us. Yet the brave girl's grief was intense that she had not arrived in time to rescue her guardian. Dom Miguel, whom she so dearly loved.

Yet 1 think, Robert," said she, with fearful eyes. "That uncle would have

guardian. Dom Miguel, whom she so uearly loved.

"Yei. I think, Robert," said she, with tearful eyes, "that uncle would have died willingly had he known the Republic was assured."

"He did know it," said I. "For a moment last evening he recovered consciousness. It was but a moment, but long enough for Pedro to tell him the glorious news of victory. And he died content, Lesba, although I know how happy it would have made him to live to see the triumph of the new Republic. His compatriots would also have taken great pride in honoring Dom Miguel above all men for his faithful service."

She made no reply to this, and for a time we walked on in gloomy silence. ***

"Tell me, Lesba, have you long had knowledge of Valcour's real identity?"
"Francisco told me the truth months ago, and that he loved her." she replied "But Valcour was sworn to the Emperor's service, and would not listen to my brother as long as she suspected him of being in league with the Republicans. So, they schemed and struggled against one another for the supremacy, while each admired the other's talents, and doubless longed for the warfare to cease." "And how came this girl to be the

"And how came this girl to be the Emperor's spy, masquerading under the guise of a man?" I inquired.

"She is the daughter of Captain Mazanovitch, who, when her mother died, took delight in instructing his child in all the arts known to the detective police. As she grew up she became of great service to her father, being often employed upon missions of extreme delicacy and even danger. Mazanovitch used to boast that she was a better detective than himself, and the Emperor became attached to the girl, and made her his confidential bodyguard, sending her at

connected with the government. When Mazanovitch was won over to the Republican conspiracy, his daughter, whose real name is Carlotta, refused to desert the Emperor; and from that time on treated her father as a traitor, and opposed her wit to his own on every oc-

casion. The male attire she wore both for convenience and as a disguise; but I have learned to know Valcour well. and have found her exceedingly sweet and womanly, despite her professional

calling." the clue; yet so extraordinary was the story that it aroused my wonder. In no other country than half-civilized Brazil, I reflected, could such a drama have

been enacted. When we returned to the house, we passed the window of Valcour's room and paused to look through the open

much better, for she smiled brightly into the face Paola bent over her, and showed no resentment when he stooped to kiss her lips.

Chapter XXV

THE GIRL I LOVE. T WAS long ago, that day that brought Liberty to Brazil and

glory to the name of Miguel de Pintra. Fate is big, but her puppets are small, and such are easily swept aside and scatfor which we hold capricious Fate re-

Yet they leave records, these atoms. I remember how we came to Rio-Val-cour, Lesba, Phola, and I-and how Pa-ola was carried through the streets perched upon the shoulders of the free citizens, while vast throngs pressed around to cheer and strong men strugaround to cheer and strong men struggled to touch the patriot's hand and load him with expressions of love and gratitude. And there was no simper upon Paola's face then, you may be sure. Since the tragedy at Bastro's that disagreeable expression had vanished forever, to be replaced by a manliness that was the fellow's most natural attribute, and fitted his fine features much better than the repulsive leer he had formerly adopted as a mask.

Valcour, still weak, but looking rarely

wreath of flowering laurel, and forced the happy and blushing girl to wear it throughout our progress through the streets of the capital.

Fonseca invited us to the palace, where he had established his headquarters; but we preferred to go to the humbler home of Captain Mazanovitch, wherein we might remain in comparative retirement during the exciting events of those first days of rejoicing.

Afterward we witnessed the grand procession in honor of the Dictator. I remember that Fonseca and his old enemy Piexoto rode together in the same carriage, all feuds being buried in their common triumph. The bluff general wore his most gorgeous uniform, and the lean statesman his shabby gray cloak. And in my judgment the adulation of the populace was fairly divided between these two champions, although the Dictator of the Republic bowde with pompous pride to right and left, while the little man who was destined to afterward become President of the United States of Birazil shrank back in his corner with assumed modesty. Yet Piexoto's eyes, shrewd and observing, were everywhere, and it may be guessed that he lost no detail of the day's events.

Paola should hat been in that proces-

the crowded streets of the capital.

It required many days to properly organize a republican form of govern-ment; but the people were patient and forbearing, and their leaders loyal and true; so, presently, order began to come out of chaos.

Meantime, Valcour mended daily, and the roses that had so long been strangers to her pale cheeks began to blossom prettily under the influence of Francisco's loving care.

They were happy days, I know; for Lesba and I shared them, although not so quietly. For the dear girl was all aglow with the triumph of Liberty, and dragged me as her escort to every mass meeting or festival and every one of the endless processions until the enthusiasm of her compatriots had thoroughly tired me out. The Liberty of Brazil bade fair

ordeal pretty well, in Lesba's society. Then came a day when I obtained my reward. Valcour had made a quick recovery, and now needed only the strengthening influence of country air; so one bright morning we all boarded a special train and traveled to Cuyaba, reaching safely the de Pintra mansion in the early evening.

* * * *

Nothing seemed changed about the dear old place, which I had already arranged to purchase from Dom Miguel's executors. Pedro had resigned his position as station master to become our majordome, and the thoughtful fellow had made every provision for our comfort on this occasion of our home-com-

Captain Mazanovitch was with us. He had retired from active service to enjoy his remaining years in his daughter's society, and although he seldom allowed one of us to catch a glimpse of his eyes, the face of the old detective had acquired an expression of content that was a distinct advantage to it.

I had chosen to occupy my old room off the library, and early on the morning following our arrival I arose and passed out into the shrubbery. Far down the winding walks, set within the very centre of the vast flower gardens, was the grave of Dom Miguel, and thither I directed my steps. As I drew near I saw the square block of white marble that the patriots had caused to be erected above the last resting place of their beloved chieftain. It bore the words

"MIGUEL DE PINTRA

SAVIOUR OF BRAZIL' and is to this day the Mecca of all good

republicans. Lesba was standing beside the tomb as I approached. Her gown was as white as the marble itself, but a red rose lay ipen her bosom and another above Dom Miguel. She did not notice my presence until I touched her arm, but then she

turned and smiled into my eyes. 'Saviour of Brazil!" she whispered softly. "It is splendid and fitting. Did you place it there, Robert?"

"No," I answered, truly; "it was due to Piexoto. He claimed the privilege for

"Dear uncle!" said she; and then we turned reverently away and strolled through the gardens. Every flower and shrub lay fair and fresh under the early sun, and we admired and drank in their fragrance, until suddenly, as we turned a corner of the hedge, I stopped and said:

"Lesba, it was here that I first met you; on this exact spot!"

"I remember," said she, brightly. "It was here that I prophesied you would be true to the Cause."

"And it was here that I loved you," I added; "for I cannot remember a moment since that first glimpse of your dear face that my heart has not been your very own."

She grew sober at this speech, and I watched her face anniously.

"Tell me, Lesba," said I at last, "will you be my wife?"

"And go to your country?" she asked, quickly.

quickly.

1 hesitated.

"All my interests are there, and my people, as well," I answered.

"But I cannot leave Brazil," she rejoined, positively; "and Brazil needs you, too, Robert, in these years when she is beginning to stand alone and take her place among nations. Has not Fonseca offered you a position as Director of Commerce?"

"Yes; I am grateful for the honor. But

offered you a position as Director of Commerce?"

"Yes; I am grateful for the honor. But I have large and important business interests at nome."

"But your uncle is fully competent to look after them. You have to I me as much. We need you here more t. an they need you at home, for your commercial connections and special training will be of inestimable advantage in assisting the kepublic to build up its commerce and extend its interests in foreign lands. Brazil needs you. I need you, Robert! Won't you stay with us—dear? For a time, at least?"

Well, I wrote Uncle Nelson, and his reply was characteristic.

"I loaned you to de Pintra, not to Brazil," his letter read. "But I am convinced the experience to be gained in that country during these experimental years of the new republic will be most valuable in fitting you for the management of your own business when you are finally called upon to assume it. You may remain absent for five years, but at the expiration of that period I shall retire from active business, and you must return to fake my place." shall retire from active business, you must return to take my place.

* * * *

On those terms I compromised with Lesba, and we were married on the same day that Valcour and Francisco Paola became man and wife.

"I should have married you, anyway," Lesba confided to me afterward; "but I could not resist the chance to accomplish one master-stroke for the good of my country." And she knew the compliment would cancel the treachery even before I had kissed her.

As I have hinted, these events happened years ago; and I wonder if I have forgotten any incident that you would be interested to know.

Dom Miguel's old home became our country residence, and we clung to it every day I could spare from my duties at the capital. It was here our little Valcour was born, and here that Francisco came afterward to bless our love and add to our happiness and content.

The Paolas are our near neighbors, and often Captain Mazanovitch drives over with their son Harcliffe to give the child a romp with our little ones. The old detective is devoted to the whole noisy band, but yesterday I was obliged to reprove Francisco for poking his chubby fingers into the captain's eyes in a futile endeavor to make him raise the ever-drooping lids.

The five-year limit expired long since; but I have never been able to fully separate my interests from those of Brazil, and although our winters are usually passed in New Orleans, where Uncle Nelson remains the vigorous head of our firm, it is in sunny Brazil that my wife and I love best to live.